Draft Urban Forest Sustainability Matrix Explanation

In order to begin the conversation about a sustainable urban forestry program for the City of Shoreline, the following matrix was used. The three categories - vegetative resource, resource management, and community framework described below – along with the performance indicator spectrum and key objectives are based on a sustainability model developed by Clark, et al (1997). The criteria in each category are comprehensive in order to demonstrate all the aspects of an urban forestry program to consider when setting goals and priorities. The **GREEN** levels are the draft desired levels to strive for and the objectives with **ORANGE** are the draft suggested priorities for the Urban Forest Strategic Plan. We are looking for community input to help us in determining if these are the desired level (goal) and top key objectives (priorities) to guide the City in the implementing the first 10-20 years of the Urban Forest Strategic Plan.

Vegetative Resource

The Vegetative Resource Matrix category has criteria that relate to the composition and condition of the urban forest. The performance indicators range in the level of diversity and known health of the trees across the community. These are often used as performance benchmarks to assess the effectiveness of resource management. A few clarifying remarks are provided below for five of the Vegetation Resource criteria.

- 1. Relative Canopy Cover – how much of the available planting space has canopy cover. As stated in the UTC report (2011), planting spaces are areas where a tree can be planted, as in open ground available to plant. This can be in passive areas of parks, planting strips along streets, even landscape islands in parking lots. Areas of impervious surfaces (roads, rooftops, etc.) are not available for planting.
- 2. Age Distribution of Trees – the general measurement, on a community-wide level, for age of trees is based on size: the larger the tree, the older it most likely is. The diameter classes referred to on the spectrum are size ranges in diameter to grossly categorize young, growing, mature, and over-mature trees in the community. Consideration of species' growth rate and mature size are factors to further determine how well the size ranges correlate to age of the population. Age diversity is key to avoiding mass age-related mortality and to ensure perpetual renewal of the urban forest.
- 3. Species suitability and 4. Species Distribution – Diversity of species and the appropriateness of those species in the area are important factors to consider for a healthy urban forest. May consider having different desired levels depending whether for natural areas and open space or improved, developed spaces (ROW, commercial zones, high density, etc.)
- 7. Native Vegetation – the local, natural biodiversity found in the city needs to be preserved and enhanced to support native ecosystems. The appropriate publicly-managed places with the most potential are in open spaces and passive parklands. The appropriate actions include restoration plantings and invasive species eradication.   High use and developed areas have the least potential for native vegetation success.

Resource Management

The criteria in the Resource Management Matrix category speak to the significant components of a city urban forestry program – staff, funding, resources, planning, policy, and operations.

Community Framework

The Community Framework Matrix category offers all aspects and possible community relationships that impact the sustainability of the urban forest. The criteria stress the importance of cooperation and deep understanding of the value of the urban forestry for a successful program.

The matrix was distributed to City staff and the Tree Board (Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Board) to introduce these concepts to consider which of the 24 key objectives would be potential top priorities the City should focus on within the first 10-20 years of implementation of the Urban Forest Strategic Plan. The responses were combined into one matrix and vetted by the Tree Board and City staff at a Tree Board Retreat on October 19, 2013. The goal of the exercise was to reach consensus on both the desired level (goal) and the top objectives (priorities) for the strategic plan to focus on for short-term strategies. The results of this exercise are shown on the attached matrix.

Comments for the Draft Urban Forest Sustainability Matrix

Please provide comments on the draft desired levels and top objectives by, **Friday, February 7.**

Key Objectives: and Desired Levels:

- o **Do you have any comments on the draft (green) desired levels (goals) and (orange) top Key Objectives for each of the categories (Vegetative Resource, Resource Management and Community Framework)? Please indicate what you would like the City to consider.**

You may provide your comments by **February 7** in one of the following ways: complete an online comment form at www.shorelinewa.gov/urbanforest; email the attached comment form to pks@shorelinewa.gov or mail the paper comment form to Maureen Colaizzi, 17500 Midvale Avenue North, Shoreline WA 98133.

Questions on how to interpret the matrix? Please contact Maureen Colaizzi, Park Project Coordinator at mcolaizzi@shorelinewa.gov.